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Addendum

Contribution by workers and trade unions**

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** The views and opinions expressed do not necessarily represent those of the United Nations.

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I. Introduction

1. The main purpose of workers and trade unions at the sixteenth session of the Commission on Sustainable Development will be to review progress on the social dimension of sustainable development, and specifically on commitments defined for workplaces, work processes and the communities in which workers and their families live. Workplaces are at the hub of production and much of the world's consumption of products provide a forum for social interaction and change. Our mission is to ensure that workers, with their energy, knowledge and organizations, are involved in the changes that must take place.

2. Trade unions are active in sustainable development work on the basis of chapter 29 of Agenda 21, taking part in sessions of the Commission, the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD), the Food and Agricultural Organization of the United Nations (FAO), the World Health Organization (WHO), the World Trade Organization, the International Labour Organization (ILO), the United Nations Environmental Programme (UNEP), and numerous other forums. They are represented by the International Trade Union Confederation and the Trade Union Advisory Committee to OECD, which together speak for over 168 million members in 153 countries and territories, as well as by Global Union Federations, which represent workers in specific sectors.

3. In January 2006, trade unions and SustainLabour partnered with ILO, UNEP and WHO to convene the first Trade Union Assembly on Labour and the Environment in Nairobi, in which over 200 trade union leaders and activists reached a common position on sustainable development linking poverty reduction, social justice, environmental protection and decent work.[1] Later in 2006, the Trade Union Sustainable Development Unit was launched as an information and data service coordinated by the International Trade Union Confederation, the Trade Union Advisory Committee, the Global Union Research Network and SustainLabour to analyse and report on progress, focusing on indicators for sustainable development. Country-by-country data relating to themes of the Commission's sixteenth session are available at www.tradeunionsdunit.org/profiles/.

II. Trade union assessment of progress since the World Summit on Sustainable Development

4. Trade unions regard the themes of the Commission's sixteenth session as a closely interrelated cluster embodying environmental, social and economic concerns. World Summit on Sustainable Development outcomes in these areas provide an agenda for our review, and it is within that context that trade unions address their priorities; in particular regarding agriculture, rural development and land use within the context of the multifunctional character of agriculture and land, with special attention to agricultural workers and Africa, where many issues are most urgent.[1]

[1] See www.global-unions.org/pdf/ohsewpO_6d.EN.pdf.

A. Effective integration of the three pillars of sustainable development

World Summit on Sustainable Development outcomes/trade union priorities

5. The Plan of Implementation of the World Summit on Sustainable Development ("Johannesburg Plan of Implementation"), the Johannesburg Declaration on Sustainable Development,[2] and Agenda 21 (confirmed by the Summit) call for the complete integration of the three dimensions of sustainable development into programmes and policies with attention to the social dimension and support for social protection systems. Poverty eradication and social development are to be integrated with sustainable patterns of production and consumption. As well, the outcomes note the work of the International Labour Organization on the social dimension of globalization and the need to promote enhanced participation of civil society and other relevant stakeholders in the implementation of Agenda 21, to promote transparency and broad public participation.

6. Agriculture and food are basic to our civilization, and patterns of development in these sectors are therefore crucial to plans for sustainable development. World Summit on Sustainable Development outcomes demand an all-encompassing review according to the principles underlying the multifunctional character of agriculture and land. The concept of the multifunctional character of agriculture and land is based on the premise that agricultural land is where workers live, raise families and build communities. It values local control and good industrial relations, with workers involved in decision-making, target-setting, implementation, auditing and reporting, with a role for trade unions as contemplated in chapters 14 and 29 of Agenda 21, on sustainable agriculture and rural development. Half of the world's workers are engaged in "agricultural production", and, while many are victims of unsustainable practices, they are also in a position to promote changes throughout the food chain.

The record since 2002

7. Although trade unions note some progress towards the multifunctional character of agriculture and land, much of the evidence points to a downward spiral in the agriculture and food system, with developments like "factory farming" pushing environmental degradation to crisis levels, combining deterioration of water quality and toxic inputs with some of the worst employment practices. The domination of food and agriculture by a few large multinational corporations results in growing influence over agricultural production and consumption through aggressive retailing, undermining the ability of local communities to grow crops for their needs, or to exercise stewardship of the land, with negative implications for safety and security of food supply. Liberalized terms of trade and deregulation have resulted in free movement of hazardous technologies and products around the world, with little attention to environmental and social costs or security of food, particularly in developing countries.

[2] Adopted at the 17th plenary meeting of the World Summit on Sustainable Development, on 4 September 2002.

Box 1
Preserving farmland and community in India

In 2007, PBKMS, the union affiliated with the International Union of Food, Agricultural, Hotel, Restaurant, Catering Tobacco and Allied Workers' Association (IUF), joined workers, small farmers and villagers of Singur, West Bengal, to prevent the loss of 400 hectares of farmland to a Tata Motors small car project that would deprive 30,000 people of their land and livelihood. Camps are permanently occupied by villagers and leaders of the Farmlands Protection Committee, with daily rallies and meetings. Protesters have been attacked by police armed with batons, shields and tear gas. Many families living near the acquired land are in urgent need of food and medicine (see www.iuf.org).

B. Poverty eradication as a focal point of sustainable development

World Summit on Sustainable Development outcomes/trade union priorities

8. The Summit called for concerted measures at all levels to enable developing countries to achieve poverty-related targets within a sustainable development context. This includes the Millennium Development Goal of halving by 2015 the proportion of people whose income is less than $1 a day and those who suffer from hunger or lack access to safe drinking water. It called for a world solidarity fund to eradicate poverty, promote social and human development in developing countries, mobilizing the effective use of financial resources to improve living standards and increase food availability and affordability, and equitable and efficient distribution systems, by promoting, for example, community-based partnerships linking urban and rural people and enterprises.

The record since 2002

9. For hundreds of millions of workers around the world, particularly agricultural workers, the Summit outcomes are far from being realized. For nearly half of the global population (3 billion people) who live on less than $2 a day, and the 1.5 billion who live in extreme poverty, poverty eradication is a dream. According to FAO, proper nourishment is denied to nearly 800 million people in developing countries and 34 million in industrialized nations, with children the most vulnerable.

10. Global climate change could negate poverty reduction gains, particularly for those who make a living from the land in Asia, home to over 60 per cent of the world population and 87 per cent of the world's known 400 million small farms. The expansion of biofuel crops linked to deforestation could worsen climate change and increase emissions, as well as lead to conflict between crops grown for food and those grown for fuel (see *Up in Smoke? Asia and the Pacific* at www.neweconomics.org/gen/asiaupinsmoke191107.aspx). This disproportionate effect of climate change on agriculture, particularly for the world's poorest, has been predicted by the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change in its fourth assessment report, which projects that the worst impacts in the short to medium term will come from increased variability of weather, with more frequent and extreme events like storms, droughts, floods and heat waves. Impacts on agriculture will particularly affect Africa, where production will be severely compromised. The

irony is that it is these people who are least to blame for climate change, but stand to lose the most.

C. Decent employment as a key aspect of sustainable development

World Summit on Sustainable Development outcomes/trade union priorities

11. The Summit called for decent employment as a route out of poverty, and called for assistance at all levels to increase income-generating employment taking into account the ILO Declaration on Fundamental Principles and Rights at Work, as well as poverty programmes that reflect priorities of the poor and enable access to productive resources, public services and institutions. It called attention to ILO and the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization Conventions to end gender-based discrimination and for improved access by indigenous people and their communities to full, sustainable employment that contributes to safe, clean and healthy work, community and physical environments. Participation of workers and their trade unions must be promoted in environment and development programmes, including employment, industrial strategies, labour adjustment programmes and technology transfers.

The record since 2002

12. This review cannot ignore the fact that so much of the world's food and agricultural production continues to be carried out under unacceptable and unsustainable conditions, particularly by waged agricultural workers, who comprise 60 per cent of workers in developing countries and are ironically among those least able to afford the food they produce. They are on the frontline of a system that is seeing continual increase in demand for agricultural products, countered now by production of biofuels. With a projected increase in world population to 9 billion by 2050, the demand will increase even more.

13. The majority of the poor in developing countries live in rural areas, where millions work as small and medium-sized farmers, peasants and shareholders, or in informal relationships and as forced, slave or indentured labour, or as child labourers. As FAO, ILO and IUF point out in their report *Agricultural Workers and Their Contribution to Sustainable Agriculture and Rural Development (2006)*, poverty is also a factor in commercial operations, with migrant labour a major issue. Today, agricultural workers on full-time, secure contracts of employment are an exception, as most are seasonal, casual or temporary. A large number are migrant workers, working for low pay, with little job or social security or unemployment benefits. Trade Union Country-by-Country Profiles reveals that some Governments allow or even promote precarious employment practices and deprive a growing number of workers of trade union protection (see www.tradeunionsdunit.org/profiles).

Box 2
Decision makers commit to action for decent work, decent life

Signing the "Call to action for decent work, decent life" in November 2007, decision makers committed to: changing unfair trade rules, protecting the rights of workers to organize, ratifying and implementing the United Nations and ILO Conventions around the protection of migrant workers and providing social protection to the

60 per cent of the world population who live without it. Signatories include dignitaries such as the Director-General of ILO, the Under-Secretary-General for Economic and Social Affairs, the Chairperson of the ILO Governing Body, the Labour Minister of Argentina, the Labour Minister of Brazil, the Labour and Social Security Minister of Portugal and the EU Presidency, and the President of the Party of European Socialists. The campaign is collecting signatures through national coalitions that include trade unions (see www.ituc-csi.org).

14. Attention must be given to the some 25 million persons who have already become environmental refugees as a result of climate and weather events; according to some predictions, 100 million persons will be directly at risk from coastal flooding by 2100.[3] The Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change has suggested that the number of those at risk could reach 150 million by 2050, many of whom will be extremely vulnerable. The German trade union IG BAU is one of many unions to respond with programmes for migrant workers. It co-founded the European Migrant Workers Union and, in 2007, launched a campaign on the theme "Fair seasonal work", which includes a labelling scheme denoting good labour practices in enterprises. As well, DGB, the German national trade union centre, maintains a department to provide services to migrant workers.[4]

Box 3
Global Union Federation provides a charter of rights for migrant workers

IUF has produced the "Charter of Rights for Migrant Workers in Agriculture" to educate trade union affiliates on migrant worker issues, noting risks from unscrupulous labour contractors, racism and xenophobia. To defend and organize these workers, IUF has vowed to expand activities to construct bipartite and multilateral international agreements between affiliates in the countries of origin and destination, and an international union card. It notes that the fundamental right of both employers and workers to join organizations of their choosing is enshrined in the principle of freedom of association as expressed in the ILO Right of Association (Agriculture) Convention, 1921 (No. 11), the Freedom of Association and Protection of the Right to Organize Convention, 1948 (No. 87) and the Rural Workers' Organizations Convention, 1975 (No. 141), all of which are integrated into the ILO Declaration on Fundamental Principles and Rights at Work.

[3] See www.ipcc.ch/pdf/assessment-report/ar4/wg2/ar4-wg2-chapter6.pdf.
[4] See www.migration-online.de.

D. Child labour and gender-based discrimination

World Summit on Sustainable Development outcomes/trade union priorities

15. The Summit called for measures to end child labour and for adjusted/gender-sensitive programmes to address problems faced by women working in agriculture and food, including violence and discrimination, and to improve the status, health and economic welfare of women and girls through full and equal access to economic opportunity, land, credit, education and health care. It called for an end to gender-based discrimination with equal employment opportunities and remuneration for all workers, whether in formal or informal working relationships, and for adequate economic, political and social support systems and services, including child-care and parental leave, and an increase in the proportion of women decision makers, planners, technical advisers, managers and extension workers in environmental and development fields.

The record since 2002

16. Noting that 70 per cent of the world's poor are female, with many involved in casual, temporary, migrant work or self-employment in food and agricultural sectors, the 2007 IUF Congress expressed concern that such fundamental rights as freedom of association, non-discrimination, maternity and social protection are absent or undermined and considered the effect of insecurity, low wages and irregular hours on family life. Hundreds of thousands of women workers lack adequate health and safety protection, with many accidents and illnesses never officially declared. Add to this gender-related violence, intimidation, sexual harassment and the fact that half a million women die annually from pregnancy-related complications exacerbated by poverty, remoteness, a lack of medical care and HIV/AIDS. Women also dominate the workforce in export processing zones that have a direct connection to the food and agricultural industry, which are beyond the reach of labour legislation and where trade unions are virtually non-existent. Many countries have yet to ratify the ILO Conventions on freedom of association, equal remuneration, discrimination, health and safety, maternity protection, workers with family responsibilities and home work, etc.

17. The Summit also called for an end to child labour and action to ensure that children can attend primary school, with access to all levels of education; for immediate and effective measures to eliminate the worst forms of child labour; for international cooperation to assist developing countries address child labour and its root causes in poverty; for measures to combat human rights abuses against young people; and for programmes to provide health, nutrition, education, literacy and poverty alleviation. It called on organizations to cooperate with ministries and organizations, with strategies for alternative employment opportunities, and to provide required training to young men and women.

18. Unfortunately, the record since 2002 shows little follow-through on Summit commitments, as levels of child labour remain high, with many condemned to the worst forms of work. ILO 2006 *Global Report: The End of Child Labour: Within Reach* shows 132 million children ages 5 to 14 years — almost half of all child labourers — employed in agriculture.[5] Child labour is one of the most shameful features of a global economy in which dangerous and precarious work is transferred

[5] *Global Report: The End of Child Labour: Within Reach*, International Labour Organization, (International Labour Office, Geneva, 2006).

from rich countries to the poor. It is particularly prevalent in Africa and other developing countries, disproportionately involving girls who are likely to work for long hours, in addition to homemaking and housekeeping tasks. Children in rural areas or in migrant worker families are twice as likely to be exploited this way, as many work alongside parents. ILO estimates that there are tens of millions of child slaves around the world, many working in agriculture. In some countries, child labour is fostered by explicit economic and social policies, and families sell children outright or bond them into slavery in order to pay off debts or simply to survive.

Box 4

A new partnership to eliminate child labour in agriculture

During the 2007 International Labour Organization International Labour Conference, IUF formed a partnership with ILO, FAO, the International Fund for Agricultural Development, the Consultative Group on International Agricultural Research (CGIAR) and the International Federation of Agricultural Producers to issue a Declaration of intent on cooperation on child labour in agriculture to conduct a broad programme of research, support and action to end child labour in this sector.

World Day against Child Labour

ILO dedicated 12 June 2007 as World Day against Child Labour, calling for a long-term, sustained commitment from Governments, employers, trade unions and civil society. Harvest for the Future: Agriculture without Child Labour calls on Governments to ratify ILO Convention 184 concerning Safety and Health in Agriculture. The International Food Policy Research Institute, representing the Alliance of the CGIAR Centres, confirmed its cooperation with other partners in efforts to eliminate child labour in agriculture. It supports 15 international research centres conducting groundbreaking work in support of policy solutions to cut hunger, malnutrition, and poverty (see www.ifap.org/en/newsroom/pr_childlabour_12-06-07.html).

E. Health and safety of workers linked to strong and accessible systems for public health

World Summit on Sustainable Development outcomes/trade union priorities

19. The Summit called for action to strengthen ILO/WHO programmes for occupational deaths, injuries and illnesses linked to public health; protect the health and safety of workers by, inter alia, taking into account the ILO Code of Practice on HIV/AIDS and the world of work; and link workplace measures to improved health services. It recognized the value of bipartite and tripartite mechanisms and greater access by workers and their representatives to training on the environment, safety and health, and economic and social welfare, and called on trade unions, employers, Governments and international agencies to involve workers and their representatives in ILO and WHO programmes to link occupational health with public health.

The record since 2002

20. Agricultural work is one of the three most dangerous occupations in the world (along with mining and construction), accounting for some 170,000 of the 330,000 work-related deaths annually and thousands more affected by injury or illness. The Summit intent was to utilize workplace programmes as a springboard to public health. The Commission at its sixteenth session therefore faces a number of issues, including the safety and security of food supply in a global climate where changes in ecosystems threaten the food supply and the health of millions.

21. Following the adoption by WHO in 2007 of a global action plan for workers' health, trade unions partnered with WHO, the International Commission on Occupational Health and the World Federation of Public Health Associations to improve occupational health and safety practices in the world's workplaces.[6]

22. Action is needed particularly to deal with unhealthy conditions in agriculture for workers who live where they work. WHO estimates that at least 40,000 people die annually from pesticides, with millions more severely poisoned in fields and homes. Agricultural workers are also first to be threatened by such new hazards as the highly pathogenic H5N1 strain of avian influenza, which raised alarm in 2007 about possible mutation into human transmission. However, most countries have yet to ratify ILO Convention 155 concerning Occupational Safety and Health or 2001 ILO Convention 184 concerning Safety and Health in Agriculture. Workers' rights are linked to working conditions, food safety and public health; as agricultural workers are in the best position to identify infection and contain outbreaks or to determine whether minimum food safety standards are being implemented. Although a proactive role by these workers and their unions could help restore confidence and public trust in food safety, few employers and Governments involve them in this way.

Box 5
Diacetyl

IUF calls for urgent global action on toxic food flavouring ingredient diacetyl to control the use of the food flavouring chemical that has been linked to the crippling lung disease bronchiolitis obliterans, or "popcorn workers lung", in the United States. Due to insufficient regulatory and labelling, however, the full extent of exposure is not known. Information on products and brands using diacetyl must be made readily accessible, and food workers' unions involved in a programme of comprehensive research into the hazards, including onsite monitoring, evaluation of production methods and protective measures and medical surveillance of workers at risk. Today's knowledge warrants an immediate suspension of the use of diacetyl pending a thorough appraisal of its workplace risks (see www.iuf.org).

[6] See www.who.int/gb/ebwha/pdf_files/WHA60/A60_R26-en.pdf.

23. HIV/AIDS is a worker and workplace issue because it impacts on the health, jobs and security of workers generally, and because the workplace is well adapted to prevention and care. ILO statistics show that the epidemic is concentrated among people in their working years, as nearly 36.5 million people involved in productive work (a wider definition than "labour force") are HIV-positive.[7] Over 70 per cent live in Africa,[8] where some Governments have already reported that the pandemic is eroding their capacity to implement climate change adaptation measures, or to provide environmental and emergency services.

24. HIV/AIDS not only kills or debilitates, it reinforces a cycle of poverty, leading to loss of household income, reduced productive capacity, and growing personal, enterprise and national cost. For many of the working poor, sickness or injury often leads to job loss with no compensation or access to health care. A conference convened by French President Chirac in March 2006 concluded that health-care costs and indirect expenses were the single most determining factor driving people into poverty. More than a third (36 per cent) of the world population lacks access to any health service. Concern about the situation has grown in recent years, but when global initiatives are undertaken, workers' representatives have yet to be invited to the table.

Box 6
28 April campaign highlights HIV/AIDS

International Commemoration Day for Dead and Injured Workers, 28 April, is dedicated to workers killed, injured or ill because of unsafe, unhealthy and unsustainable workplaces and processes. Since the first International Commemoration Day ceremony at the United Nations in New York in 1996, the Day has grown to encompass thousands of rallies, sectoral, educational and lobbying events around the world. International Commemoration Day, 28 April, is now recognized formally by Governments in 14 countries or territories (Argentina, Belgium, Bermuda, Brazil, Canada, Dominican Republic, Greece, Luxembourg, Panama, Poland, Portugal, Spain, Taiwan and Ukraine. In addition, the Andean Community — Bolivia, Colombia, Ecuador and Peru — and associate member Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela have agreed to recognize the Day, which would bring the total number of countries recognizing the Day to 19. The International Trade Union Confederation has begun a process for eventual recognition of 28 April by the General Assembly. Country activities for 2007 can be seen at www.global-unions.org/pdf/ohsewpT__4a.EN.pdf.

25. The world today urgently requires more health-care workers, according to Public Services International and WHO, as more than 1.3 billion people lack access to basic care, with the greatest shortage in sub-Saharan Africa, which has 11 per

[7] International Labour Organization, *HIV/AIDS and work: global estimates, impact and response 2006* (Geneva, 2006).

[8] See Trade Union Country-by-Country Profiles for HIV/AIDS at www.tradeunionsdunit.org/profiles/profiles.php?ID=3&Lang=ENG.

cent of the world population and 24 per cent of the burden of disease, but only 3 per cent of the world's health workers. The *WHO World Health Report 2007* reports that more than 4 million additional doctors, nurses and other public health workers are urgently needed to fill the gap in 57 countries, 36 of which are in sub-Saharan Africa. Unfortunately, these countries are hardest hit by an out-migration of health-care workers. While trade unions support the right to migrate, the negative impact of this migration on health-care systems in developing countries, the majority of whom are women, has reached crisis proportions and must be addressed.

Box 7

Public Services International organizes international migration and women health-workers campaign

In December 2005, Public Services International called on affiliates to join a week of campaigning around the issues of ethical recruitment of health-care workers and the negative impact of migration on health services in sending countries. A 16-country network, established as part of the Public Services International Migration and Women Health Workers Project, invites all affiliates, particularly those with members in the health sector, to organize activities in their regions. As women are affected, both as health workers and users, women's committees are particularly involved. Public Services International has developed information materials, a model resolution and a leaflet about the importance of ethical recruitment for trade unions to use in their campaigns (for more information, e-mail equality@world-psi.org).

F. Employment transition as a fundamental precondition to implementation for sustainable development

World Summit on Sustainable Development outcomes/trade union priorities

26. Human insecurity, particularly job insecurity, can be brought on by changes that, more often than not, have left workers and their communities bearing the greatest cost. Without "just transition" policies and programmes, the inevitable result of job loss or dispossessed land holdings is increased poverty, social inequity and hardship. The Summit called for measures to promote the participation of workers and their trade unions in programmes for employment, industrial strategies, labour adjustment programmes and technology transfers, and recommended that international financial institutions and other agencies support developing country economies in transition, in their efforts to adjust to changes in energy and related technologies.

The record since 2002

27. Workers continue to face economic hardship or insecurity as a result of climate change and other drivers of change. Threats to traditional patterns of agriculture and food supply have grown exponentially since the Summit, affecting agricultural workers, small farmers and others who depend on these sectors, especially in developing countries. Trade unions have consistently lobbied for employment

transition programmes to provide an element of justice and build confidence and support for national efforts to address climate change. The trade union Nairobi Action Plan for Africa depends on the involvement of workers and their communities in climate change adaptation strategies that are especially required on that continent.[9] Except for very few negotiated agreements with employers and Governments, a "just transition" remains a distant ideal. Governments and employers have yet to ensure that workers are able to adapt, to include as a minimum, adequate job forecast and skills management, a reconversion programme and income support programmes for workers in affected industries. Trade Union Country-by-Country Profiles shows that most countries have yet to ratify such ILO Conventions as Convention No. C-122 concerning Employment Policy or the ILO 1974 Resolution on the Social and Economic Consequences of Preventive Action, which calls for arrangements for social and economic consequences affecting workers.

Box 8
Decent work for sustainable development campaign

Decent work for sustainable development: the challenge of climate change, a paper for the Working Party on the Social Dimension of Globalization (GB.300/WP/SDG/1, Geneva, November 2007) focuses on socially just transition to green jobs and the relationship between climate change and decent work. The European Trade Union Confederation, SYNDEX, the German Wuppertal Institute and the Spanish institute ISTAS undertook their own study, financed by the European Commission, Belgium, Finland, France, Italy, Spain and the United Kingdom, which examined the potential impact on employment of the EU's carbon dioxide (CO_2) reduction targets concerning four key industrial sectors: energy production (electricity, oil), energy-intensive industries (steel, cement), transport, and building/construction; it concluded that there could be an overall net gain in employment identified with transfers to environmentally friendly forms of energy production and use. It warned, however, that jobs will be created only where companies take advantage of opportunities created by climate policies and lost where companies cannot adapt (see "Climate change and employment: Impact on employment in the European Union-25 of climate change and CO_2 emission reduction measures by 2030").

28. Finally, a "just transition" to sustainable patterns of production and consumption cannot occur without changes to trading patterns that disadvantage developing countries. Development in industrialized nations has provided an inappropriate model for other parts of the world, particularly Africa. Developing countries struggle with negative terms of trade, crippling debt, and demands for structural adjustment that render sustainable development much more difficult.

[9] Trade Union statement to COP 12 2006, available at www.global-unions.org/pdf/ohsewpP_8Ae.EN.pdf.

Box 9
ILO head promotes green jobs initiative as transition strategy

According to ILO Director-General Juan Somavia, huge opportunities exist to create green jobs through energy and industrialization policies that reduce emissions as investments in energy efficiency, clean energy technology and renewable energy have great potential to create productive and decent work; the market for clean energy technology alone could be worth 1.9 trillion dollars by 2020, creating green jobs and sustainable economic growth. "We must also prepare for job losses and support workers and enterprises in shifting to new ways of working that substantially reduce emissions," said Somavia. "We also need to invest much more in low emissions strategies for development that do not slow progress in poverty reduction ... [to] ensure a smooth transition for all involved" (statement by ILO Director-General at the High-level Event on Climate Change, New York, 24 September 2007).

G. Energy, water and chemical inputs into the food and agricultural industry

World Summit on Sustainable Development outcomes/trade union priorities

29. Energy, water and other major inputs into food and agriculture industries are major issues for production and consumption and public utilities. The Summit called for the integration of all energy considerations, including affordability and accessibility, into all programmes, especially for such energy-consuming sectors as agriculture. It also called for research and development on reliable, affordable, economically viable, socially acceptable and environmentally sound energy for sustainable development, and for the development and implementation of integrated land management and water-use plans with strengthened capacity for Governments, local authorities and communities to monitor and manage these resources. It established priorities for access to potable domestic water, hygiene education and improved sanitation and waste management at the household level, with priority given to the needs of the poor, within stable and transparent regulatory government frameworks involving all concerned stakeholders to monitor and improve accountability of all service providers.

The record since 2002

30. Problems noted at the Summit in 2002 persist today, as productivity and profit priorities in food and agricultural industries overshadow environmental and social concerns. Environmental degradation from unsustainable practices is now at crisis levels from unsustainable patterns of energy, chemicals and water-related use, including increased inputs of pesticides, biomedical substances, fertilizers and toxic inputs; increased use and deterioration of water quality, loss of biodiversity, wildlife habitat and landscape; and lack of safe water for domestic purposes. Groundwater contamination from factory farms continues from unsafe use of pesticides and other synthetic inputs, as well as from manure in lagoons or on the land. The Sierra Club estimates that, as a result of contamination, 13 per cent of the drinking-water wells

in the American midwest contain unsafe levels of nitrates, as well as environmentally damaging amounts of phosphorus and antibiotics and air pollution from emission of hydrogen sulfide and ammonia. Researchers have found that farm workers and families living near animal factories show symptoms of respiratory, physical and emotional illness at levels significantly higher than other groups, as well as high levels of tension, depression, anger and fatigue.[10]

Box 10
North American coalition opposes intensive livestock operations

The Beyond Factory Farming Coalition is drawing attention to hazards posed by livestock operations in North America, where giant feedlots of 20,000 cattle, mega hog barns of 5,000 to 20,000 hogs, poultry batteries of 100,000 birds exist on small land areas, and under intensive conditions resembling manufacturing. Animals' feed is often grown far from these "factories" and manure is spread or sprayed onto fields in quantities that exceed the nutrient needs of crops, causing pollution to surface and ground water. Numerous toxic or pathenogenic substances are found in drinking water around these farms: hog urine and feces, human waste, hog carcasses, cleaning chemicals, insecticides, weed seeds, volatile organic compounds, salts, nitrogen, phosphorus, potassium, calcium and manganese, metals (cadmium, zinc, nickel, lead, iron, boron and copper), vaccines, antibiotics and antibiotic-resistant bacteria, parasites, and other bacterial and viral pathogens such as cryptosporidium, salmonella and E-coli. The quantity of manure is itself an issue, as factories use millions of gallons of drinking water to flush manure out of the barns into lagoons or holding pits. Countries spend billions of dollars to treat human sewage, but the greater volumes of animal manure produced on factory farms receive little or no treatment (see www.beyondfactoryfarming.org).

31. Although electricity supply has been extended to 1.3 billion more people in developing countries in the last 25 years, 1.4 billion people still lack access according to the International Energy Agency, with the number reliant on biomass expected to increase to 2.7 billion by 2030. The World Health Organization has blamed exposure to biomass for nearly 2 million deaths from cancer, respiratory infections and lung diseases. As well, lack of access to energy provides a serious barrier to basic social goods like health care and education. The end of "cheap oil", moreover, means increased poverty for many, including recipients of debt relief under the Heavily Indebted Poor Countries initiative that are heavily dependent on their food and agricultural sectors. To this injustice can be added the fact that global dependence on fossil fuels is a major cause of the climate change that threatens lives and livelihoods, particularly in sub-Saharan Africa and Asia.

32. Although widespread privatization, deregulation and liberalization have slowed, they continue to affect food and agricultural industries, their workers and communities, particularly in Africa. Water and energy prices continue to rise in

[10] See www.sierraclub.org/cleanwater/that_stinks.

some of the world's poorest countries, forcing households to spend a substantial part of their income for safe water and sanitation, and creating particular difficulties for girls and women.

Box 11
Public Services International

Public Services International, together with its research arm, the Public Services International Research Unit, conducts cutting edge research on issues relating to energy and water services and other utilities and services. A 2007 study on the Asian Development Bank's involvement in power sector privatization in Pakistan, "Water as a public service", shows how the international community can support Governments, public institutions and workers in developing countries to extend and improve water and sanitation services. As well, Public Services International published a report in collaboration with the World Development Movement, "Pipe dreams: the failure of the private sector to invest in water services in developing countries", which reviews investment in sub-Saharan Africa, South Asia and East Asia (dozens of related publications may be accessed at www.world-psi.org).

33. The Summit renewed the commitment in Agenda 21 to sound management of chemicals through their life cycle, to ensure minimal adverse effects on human health and the environment from their production and use; to using transparent science-based risk assessment and management procedures; and to taking into account the precautionary principle. It committed to partnerships and to helping developing countries strengthen capacity for management of chemicals and hazardous wastes, and to promoting ratification and implementation of international instruments on chemicals and hazardous waste, including the Rotterdam Convention on the Prior Informed Consent Procedure for Certain Hazardous Chemicals and Pesticides in International Trade and the Stockholm Convention on Persistent Organic Pollutants. It also encouraged countries to implement the new globally harmonized system for classification and labelling of chemicals.

The record since 2002

34. The production and use of chemicals in agriculture and food is producing a growing number of environmental and human health problems. The highest level of exposure normally occurs in the workplace, but agriculturally dependent communities are also exposed to a "chemical cocktail" spread by wind or water. Ozone depletion, acid deposits, pollution of water, soil and air, and loss of biodiversity are by-products of improper uses of chemicals, particularly ones that are persistent, bio-accumulative and travel across boundaries. Participation by workers and their trade unions is crucial to proper management of chemicals, and even though participatory methods have yielded enormous public health and environmental benefits, they have yet to be recognized in most national policies. Such key notions as the precautionary principle, clean production, best available techniques, and best environmental practice have yet to be put into practice.

35. Trade unions have collaborated on such international agreements as the Strategic Approach to International Chemicals Management, and Conventions and Agreements under ILO, UNEP, on persistent organic pollutants, prior informed consent, greenhouse gases under the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, the Intergovernmental Forum on Chemical Safety, and the Bahia Declaration on Chemical Safety. Good results are expected from the implementation of European Community Regulation 1907/2006 concerning the registration, evaluation and authorization of chemicals in the European Union.

H. Technological innovation in agriculture and other industries related to the themes of the sixteenth session of the Commission on Sustainable Development

World Summit on Sustainable Development outcomes/trade union priorities

36. Technological innovation is a primary area of concern for all consumers, but particularly for workers who come face to face with new products and processes that threaten their health and that of their communities. The Summit addressed genetically modified organisms and other innovations involved in the intensification of food and agriculture production and called for action to promote and finance access to and development and diffusion of environmentally sound technologies and corresponding knowledge, in particular to developing countries on favourable terms, as set out in Chapter 34 of Agenda 21. It also called for the participation of workers and their trade unions for policies and programmes on environment and development, including for employment, industrial strategies, labour adjustment programmes and technology transfers.

The record since 2002

37. The rapid and, for the most part, unregulated introduction of new technology into the world's food and agricultural systems continues to threaten the safety and security of our food supply, at the same time as it threatens the health of workers and the natural environment. Liberalized trading patterns buttressed by international agreements make it difficult for countries to protect themselves against inappropriate or dangerous innovations, or to set high food standards. Trade unions have documented threats posed by genetically modified organisms, and the countless hormones, medicinal additives and other substances daily introduced into our agricultural operations and food supplies. United Farm Workers of America (UFW) regularly reports on excessive drug residues in livestock that put farmworkers at risk. A UFW book, *California's Broken Promises: The Laws On The Books Are Not The Laws In The Fields*, reveals many of these problems.

Box 12

United Farmworkers of America has issued an alert concerning Beef Northwest Feeders, one of the largest American feedlots, which fattens approximately 40,000 cows a year as Country Natural Beef. The Food and Drug Administration has warned the company about excessive residues of two drugs that violate federal requirements. Sixty per cent of Country Natural Beef is sold through Whole Foods, a "natural food" store that claims ethical business practices. UFW has appealed to Whole Foods to ensure that the beef sold in their stores does not contain unsafe levels of drugs, and to stand by fieldlot workers who seek union representation (see www.ufwaction.org/campaign/beef).

38. Trade unions have negotiated numerous workplace-centred approaches mechanisms for occupational health and safety that can be readily adapted to technological change and food safety. Joint trade union/employer initiatives for assessment and implementation could address such outstanding issues as risk and hazard assessment and analysis/methodology in biotechnology, including public health risks; quality attributes for nutritional content; production methods and effective regulatory compliance; and support for the Codex Alimentarius.

Box 13

Food and agricultural workers' union kicks off food sovereignty campaign

IUF, at its 2007 Congress, adopted policy defining the right of people to sovereignty in the production, distribution and consumption of food in order to guarantee sustainable food. The current liberal economic model is forcing countries, once self-sufficient in food, now to import agricultural products. Export-oriented monocultural agro-business encroaches on public land occupied by traditional populations and family farmers, and the mass planting of the African palm and eucalyptus in Latin America, Asia and Africa, as well as sugar cane, palm and soya for bio-fuels, destroys jobs, degrades the environment, exhausts natural resources and destroys family farming. IUF will support the fight for agrarian reform to preserve family farming and pursue decent standards of living and working conditions. As well, the Alternative Project for Sustainable Mutual Rural Development will bring farmers' and farm workers' organizations together to draw attention to the impact of plantations on work and society.

III. Moving forward with workplace action and agreements

World Summit on Sustainable Development outcomes/trade union priorities

39. As presented in chapter 29 of Agenda 21, workers and their organizations possess tremendous capacity for sustainability. The Summit called for the removal of barriers to worker engagement and positive steps towards participation and empowerment, on the basis of decent employment. It called for good industrial relations and partnerships to strengthen the contribution of workplace relations towards sustainable development, including a role for unions in addressing industrial change with environmental collective agreements aimed at achieving sustainable development. Numerous references are made to joint or tripartite mechanisms at the workplace, community and national levels to deal with safety and health, and to promote workers' freedom of association according to ILO Conventions, which Governments are encouraged to ratify and implement. A central theme of the Summit was the focus on "Partnerships", including workplace-based partnerships and programmes, to promote transparency and accountability and information tools (e.g., eco-labels) that reflect human health and safety aspects.

The record since 2002

40. Unfortunately, the record shows that, far from following through with the Summit commitment to good industrial relations, many nations have moved in the opposite direction. The casualization and globalization of employment have reduced worker access to trade union representation. More drastically, the 2007 *Annual Survey of violations of trade union rights*, compiled by the International Trade Union Confederation, documents an alarming increase in the number of people killed because of trade union activities, from 115 in 2005 to 144 in 2006, with the sharpest increases in Colombia, Asia and Africa. Thousands were arrested for participation in actions to protect workers' rights, and many thousands more faced direct intimidation or dismissal. A number of industrialized countries have also moved to further restrict trade union rights.[11]

41. Workers continue to assert their rights, with information and support for organizing precarious work and educational resources, such as the recent IUF manual, *Outsourcing and Casualization in the Food and Beverage Industry: Threat to Workers and Unions*. Dialogue is the basis of over 2 million collective agreements negotiated by trade unions worldwide, which are supplemented by European Works Councils and the Framework Agreements that provide a platform of standards that a multinational company must apply wherever it operates. One of the earliest in the food industry was a 2001 agreement between IUF and Chiquita Brands International, the largest employer of banana workers in Latin America.[12] As well, a proven industrial relations mechanism is the workplace committee for environment and occupational health, whose primary mandate is to educate members and participate in planning and monitoring for improved company performance. The Summit also saw a role for workplace assessments whereby trade unions and employers jointly assess workplace performance according to agreed checklists of environmental, resource, occupational, health or social criteria, leading to joint plans of action to identify and resolve problems.

[11] See Human and Trade Union Rights at www.ituc-csi.org.

[12] See www.ituc-csi.org.

Box 14
Swedish truckers to perform workplace supply chain assessments

Trucking and transport companies in Sweden are participating in nationwide supply-chain assessments that will determine successful bids for transport or shipping contracts. The national Swedish Labour Organization and the National Society for Traffic Safety have agreed with more than 100 Swedish retail and manufacturing companies, a major component in the food and agricultural system, to take part in Quality III to evaluate transport contract bids based on their performance relative to environment, traffic safety and gas emission indicators detailed in a manual for this purpose. It will award a Quality III certificate, which a growing number of retail and manufacturing companies have agreed to honour, thus shifting the burden of responsibility from the truck driver to the trucking companies. Quality III will scrutinize a company's air pollution, fuel mileage, vehicle performance and maintenance, as well as workloads, health care, ergonomics and work management, speed policies, equipment safety and supervision, etc. (for more information, contact Lasse Holm: lasse.holm@Q3.se).

42. Since the Summit, trade unions have increased their capacity for training and information systems developed for occupational health and safety that are based on democratic forms of worker participation, which are being adapted for agricultural workers, farmers, communities and consumers. As well, initiatives in vocational training, improvement of skills and lifelong learning, such as the 2002 European Agreement on Vocational Training in Agriculture, are equipping workers to adapt to changing conditions, as well as contributing to improved economic performance. Such instruments as enterprise assessments/audits and eco-labels also have an educational impact, at the same time as they meet Agenda 21 objectives in the workplace.

Global and regional alliances

43. Many of the issues of the Commission's sixteenth session review can be linked to deepening globalization, which calls for a collective global response. Trade unions have never subscribed to the popular idea that globalization has rendered nations powerless to serve the needs of their citizens, and continue to see the State as playing a central role in providing such services as education and health care, etc. In this regard, we note that the Summit called for a stronger role for Government by taking action at all levels to promote corporate responsibility and accountability, on the basis of the principles of the Rio Declaration on Environment and Development.[13]

[13] A/CONF.151/26 (vol. I), annex I.

Box 15

German trade union promotes sustainable development through joint projects

German trade unions undertook one of the world's first sustainable development initiatives when they launched their Confederation eco-audit in 1994. The Confederation of German Trade Unions (DGB) worked together with such environmental organizations as the Association for Environment and Natural Preservation (BUND), the Nature and Biodiversity Conservation Union (NABU) and the World Wildlife Fund (WWF) to establish an ecological audit that was independent from industry employers. A successful environmental initiative for sustainable forestry was undertaken by IG BAU. The trade union for construction, agriculture and environment workers was jointly responsible for founding the Forest Stewardship Council in Germany, the first organization to develop a certification system for sustainably produced wood. The Forest Stewardship Council promotes appropriate forest management all over the world, with close attention to the balance between ecological, social and economic demands of forestry.

44. Trade unions continue to pursue strategic alliances with business and other Major Groups, as well as national and sectoral initiatives. A 2005 agreement between the Spanish Government, the Confederación Sindical de Comisiones Obreras, the Unión General de Trabajadores and leading business organizations calls for collaboration on national efforts to meet Kyoto obligations, with attention to social and employment impacts. Agreements also exist between the Government and the Confederación General del Trabajo in Argentina, and in Belgium, the Government has geared its approach to "flexible mechanisms" under the Kyoto Protocol to social and employment policy, dictating that project proposals must apply the principles of the OECD Guidelines for multinational enterprises, ILO Conventions and the Declaration on Fundamental Principles and Rights at Work. Trade unions monitor projects to ensure that essential services are delivered to local populations, and for environmental, social and economic impacts.

Box 16

IUF intervenes in key European pesticide regulation vote

Pesticide regulation in the European Union not only impacts the lives of workers in one of the world's largest agricultural economies, it also affects global practices. For this reason, IUF intervened regarding the vote on the EU Thematic Strategy on the Sustainable Use of Pesticides in October 2007. A proposed EU Regulation for plant protection products and a Directive for sustainable use of pesticides will define a regulatory framework for agrochemicals for years. In an open letter to members of the European Parliament, IUF general secretary Ron Oswald and European Regional General Secretary Harald Wiedenhofer called for assurance that human and environmental health will govern pesticide authorization, that the most toxic pesticides be eliminated or reduced, and that authorizations be based on comprehensive evaluation (see www.sustainlabour.org).